

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

NATION BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN
THE GERMAN PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM
CONCEPT -- MEANS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF EFFORT?

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ABSTRACT

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Nation Building is a way to stabilize failed states for the long term. In the environment of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), it is a logical consequence of managing the results of military operations to win the peace.

Germany focused in Afghanistan initially on stabilization and reconstruction in the capital of Kabul with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Parallel to combating remnants of Taliban and al-Qaeda, the U.S. started to set up local Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in the Afghan provinces, using the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) mandate.

Recognizing the requirement of a geographically wider approach in stabilization and reconstruction, Germany joined the PRT process by the end of 2003. Different from the U.S., the German PRT operates under the ISAF mandate.

This paper examines the policy and the different approaches within the overall PRT concept. Potential impacts in terms of practicability, force protection, efficiency and lasting effects on reconstruction and development are assessed. The German PRT concept combines organizational requirements for Nation Building with practical constraints concerning ministerial competencies and security. The paper concludes with recommendations for further improvements.

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NATION BUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN. THE GERMAN PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM CONCEPT – MEANS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF EFFORT?

Whereas strategy is only concerned with the problem of winning military victory, grand strategy must take the longer view – for its problem is the winning of the peace. Such an order of thought is not a matter of 'putting the cart before the horse,' but of being clear where the horse and the cart are going.

–B.H. Liddell Hart ¹

NATION BUILDING AS A CONSEQUENCE OF WAR-FIGHTING

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 resulted in the first war of the United States of America in the 21st century. Under the umbrella of the UN mandated² Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), U.S. and coalition forces launched an attack against Afghanistan, starting October 7.³ The military operations were based on three decisions in September 2001.⁴ U.S. forces would not provide peacekeeping or security for the country at large. Second, other countries would be discouraged from conducting peacekeeping outside the capital. Third, U.S. forces were not to be engaged in any counter-narcotics activities. The subsequent American offensive operations, focused on the destruction of the Taliban armed forces, the disruption of the al-Qaeda network and the denial of Afghan territory for any future terrorist use.⁵

Being strongly dependent on the military as its major source of power, a defeat of its force implied the breakdown of the Taliban administration. International law imposes a variety of responsibilities onto "Occupying Powers" which include responsibilities of governance, maintenance of security, public hygiene and medical care for the population and further tasks in sustaining a country.⁶ Moreover, Afghanistan has been an instable state for decades and a weak central government could easily turn the country again into new safe heavens for terrorist activities.

Acting in light of Sept 11th, the U.S. focused primarily on a military response and managed to generate broad political and diplomatic support. Consequently, the concept for a U.S. military role in post conflict operations in Afghanistan remained initially vague. The Commander U.S. Central Command's mission for the final stage of OEF in Afghanistan was to "establish capabilities of coalition partners to prevent the reemergence of terrorism and to provide support for humanitarian assistance efforts."⁷ This implied that measures to prevent the reemergence of terrorism would be planned together with the humanitarian assistance in a separate process.⁸

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A GRAND STRATEGY IN FIGHTING THE GWOT

As war fighting has direct influence on the requirements and conditions for post conflict stability operations, both aspects should ideally be merged into one holistic approach. Combat operations and requirements for post conflict stability interact and influence each other. Thus, traditional military criteria of success like destruction, denial and seizure of terrain in war fighting need to be influenced by winning the peace. To exploit the opportunities of grand strategy, fighting and post conflict operation have to become part of a single integrated planning and execution process.

Military operations in Afghanistan ran ahead of post conflict planning. A UN led conference of the Afghanistan Support Group in December 2001, named after its meeting location in Germany, resulted in the so called "Bonn Agreement."⁹ This document created the basis for the post conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan and its current structure. It provided the framework for a gradual development of the country into a desirable and culturally accepted future.

SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

This paper examines the role of the military in Nation Building through the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) concept. The German PRT approach is contrasted with other nations' concepts. Impacts on the practicability, force protection, efficiency and lasting effects on reconstruction are assessed. The German PRT concept combines organizational requirements for Nation Building with political constraints concerning ministerial competencies and security. The paper concludes with recommendations for further improvements.

Within the context of this paper, the term Nation Building is used as a specific post conflict activity. Nation Building is understood as a deliberate action, taken by civilian and military organizations, to initiate a broad spectrum of coordinated development processes. These processes include progress in the following areas: political, social, jurisdiction, medical care, education, economic, governance as well as improvements in the security and administration sectors. The purpose of Nation Building processes is the transformation of a society that is initially characterized by results of war and/or deficiencies in governance and low grade of internal organization. The aim of the transformation is a stable, increasingly self sustained and coherent national entity which is peacefully embedded into the international system of nations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR SECURITY AND NATION BUILDING

THE POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Bonn Agreement of December 6th 2001, signed by representatives of the then Afghanistan (AFG) political opposition, outlines the fundamentals of the future democratic AFG state, the responsibilities of the Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA)¹⁰ and the role of the international community.¹¹ It specifies procedures to develop a constitution and measures to initiate Nation Building. The Agreement comprises the deployment of the UN mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to Kabul and neighboring areas.¹² In parallel to substantial financial support, major industrialized nations took over sponsoring roles in key areas of Nation Building, such as the Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of former AMF militia, the building and training of the new Afghan National Army (ANA), the training of the Afghan National Police (ANP), the establishment of the jurisdictional system and counter-narcotics operations.¹³

The subsequent progress in Nation Building was achieved under the umbrella of an increasingly stable and relative secure environment. In a military assessment in April 2003, 27 out of 32 provinces were considered stable compared to 21 out of 32 in November 2002.¹⁴

ISAF contributed to an extremely favorable environment in the Kabul area through its sheer presence and the direct assistance of the ATA. Different from the OEF antiterrorism coalition forces, ISAF's Area of Operation (AOR), its competencies and the modes of mutual cooperation and support were detailed in a formal Military Technical Agreement (MTA) signed January 4, 2002 with the ATA.¹⁵ ISAF's appearance was especially in the initial phase chosen deliberately differently from OEF, to communicate the mission of a force deployed to assist the sovereign ATA in improving the situation. That's why ISAF used body armor but soft hats, operated mostly unarmored vehicles and was keen to blend into the local population, showing friendly faces and deliberate openness for communication. It was aimed to contrast the image of war fighting and being part of an occupation force.

The Rules of Engagements (ROE) mandated ISAF to use force for self defense and to enforce the accomplishment of its mission. It has, however, always been ISAF's aim to enable AFG authorities to act themselves while being visibly present and using force only as the very last resort.¹⁶ From December 2001, ISAF provided immediate technical support to the AFG police and started to conduct highly visible joint patrols with AFG policemen in Kabul. Its constant 24/7 presence turned out to catalyze changes by communicating visible security and confidence to the local population while encouraging the police and local administration to

comply with international standards and the provisions of the agreements. Frequent personal contacts with locals opened valuable interfaces for Human Intelligence (HUMINT) and contributed to force protection.

Besides a wide array of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) projects ranging from training in mine clearing and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) to the reconstruction and equipment of schools and hospitals, ISAF achieved, in terms of numbers from February until August 2003, an average of 80 military patrols and joint vehicle check points with the Kabul police, conducted every 24 hours, removed 118,000 charges and 50 rockets and cleared most of the minefields at Kabul International Airport. In coordination with AFG authorities, the CIMIC teams carried out 530 village assessments focusing on education, water and health; 17 out of 37 major CIMIC projects were finalized, 66 projects newly planned.¹⁷ Operational Information (OI) initiatives like a 24/7 radio broadcast and a periodical local Kabul Newspaper with 160,000 issues, enable ISAF to shape the spectrum of media and to use it as an additional multiplier for the projection of security and stability. ISAF and OEF coordinate at the three star level in the Kabul – Bagram area and sustain their influence with the ATA by separate liaison teams attached to the different AFG ministries.

STRENGTHS AND SHORTFALLS

The international community and ISAF act in support of the sovereignty of the AFG government. The reconstruction and development thus becomes a deliberate responsibility of the AFG people as a whole. Foreign countries are neither managing nor formally driving the process of Nation Building. They are prepared to respond to requests and to assist the AFG efforts. ISAF is deployed at the request of the ATA with the mission to assist in the maintenance of security in its respective AOR. The responsibility for the provision of security and law and order throughout the country resides with the ATA and includes the obligation to maintain a police force operating in accordance with internationally recognized standards and AFG law. The provisions of the Bonn Agreement and the MTA proved to be far sighted. The codified status and the authority of ISAF allowed it to claim rights and responsibilities from the parties and to enforce adherence to the prescribed Nation Building process. At the same time the ATA did not appear to be servants of western countries' interests. This overall setting allowed for the western countries to retain major influence on the Nation Building process, without the ATA losing its authority and credibility.

The conceptual shortfall of the organizational structure for Nation Building in Afghanistan was the initial limitation of the development progress to the wider Kabul area. The ATA gained

only limited influence in the different regional centers outside the capital as many provinces remained unstable. Attempts to replace civilian administrators at the provincial level repeatedly failed, when the local security forces could not be re-structured simultaneously.¹⁸ Moreover, without expansion of power, the government remains unable to generate adequate tax income to turn the reconstruction of the country into a sustaining process. The advantage of concentrating the economical and military effort on the development of the AFG central administration and its capital perpetuated the historical dilemma of a weak government in Kabul with only limited political reach. The AFG government therefore repeatedly encouraged the international community to project the Nation Building process into the AFG provinces while simultaneously extending the presence of ISAF to other cities.¹⁹

CHANGES IN POLICY

The U.S. realized in the course of the year 2002 that fighting terrorists and trying to win hearts and minds through sporadic operations by teams of Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations personal was insufficient.²⁰ President Bush announced in a speech at the Virginia Military Institute in April 2002 a change to the previous strictly military-operational oriented AFG policy.²¹ Helping Afghanistan to develop its own stable government and its own army required a change in OEF focus and priorities. An increase of CIMIC activities by setting up so called civil military operations centers in the fall of 2002 was followed by adopting a plan to establish formal Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in the provinces.²²

While supporting the change in the U.S. policy the ISAF force providing nations were unwilling to participate by setting up their own PRTs.²³ The structural requirement of expanding into the provinces was out of question.²⁴ The change in policy led finally to the build up of 13 U.S., 1 New Zealand and 3 ISAF led PRTs in regional centers like Gardez, Kandahar, Herat, Masar-E-Sharif and Konduz.²⁵

THE PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS

OUTLINE OF THE AMERICAN PRT CONCEPT

PRT effect changes through non-violent means and promote the emergence of the central government.²⁶ They form and facilitate information sharing bodies in support of the ATA and stimulate and enhance the local reconstruction effort. The concept aspires to facilitate cooperation between U.S., international and local organizations and the ATA and to promote security and safety by monitoring, assessing and reporting military, political and civil efforts. They provide expert advice to local leaders and officials, stand by to train ANA and law

enforcement formations and are able to negotiate and diffuse tensions. Their reports to higher headquarters include security operations, improvements in infrastructure and economy, health care and basic human needs, but also attitudes of the population and the acceptance of the ATA by local leaders.²⁷

The teams are tailored to regional requirements with a total strength between 60 and 100 personnel. As a rule, every PRT is composed of military and civilian members with interagency and possibly multinational attachments. The typical functions include a headquarters and supply section, Civil Military Operation Section, Reconstruction Facilitation, Security Sector Section, Linguist and Interpreters, Medical Capability and Engineers. If necessary, reach back capabilities could be pulled forward and employed. Combat operations, besides defense, will be performed by other forces.

Assessing the mission spectrum of the PRT, most of the aspects required for the initiation of a local Nation Building process seem to be covered. The option to pull forward additional reach back capabilities enables the PRT to meet upcoming requirements. Forward deployment with integration into a capable command and communications network opens vertical and horizontal coordination.

The PRT concept widely mirrors the spectrum of tasks given to ISAF in Kabul. Major differences come with the absence of Joint Patrolling and Checkpoint Operations and the intent to control and to coordinate functions with AFG, specialized UN agencies and NGOs. With regard to the development strategy and the relations to AFG authorities, aspects like “assisting and enabling” are conceptually reflected. Different from OEF combat functions, the PRT concept implies the establishment of a permanent physical presence of dispersed forces, embedded into the local communities where they actively seek and maintain contacts with the local population and their political and religious leaders. Despite the ongoing war against terrorists, personnel involved need to be capable of adopting a different set of attitudes compared to soldiering in combat missions and to accept a certain amount of risk as servicemen fighting the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

The PRT concept is designed to provide a transparent situational awareness and to foster an increasingly safer and more stable environment. However, the limited number of personnel requires each person to be capable of performing more than one of the specialized functions. It also calls for stamina, to accomplish a tough mission spectrum over a sustained period of time. The readiness of U.S. agencies, UN, NGO, and AFG authorities, to have their activities coordinated by a low level U.S. military detachment seems at least to be doubtful.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF U.S. PRT

The first US PRTs were set up between December 2002 and March 2003 under command of the Combined Joint Operations Task Force 180 (CJTF 180), at Gardez, Bamyān and Konduz.²⁸ The PRT came with a similar structure, comprising personnel strengths between 46 and 68. The largest PRT in Gardez had 60 servicemen in command, intelligence, tactical air control party (TACP), linguistic, patrol and security functions. Eight civilian slots were left open for Security Sector Coordination, CIMIC, ATA representative, UNAMA and other U.S. governmental agencies and NGOs. The two other PRTs were similar in principle. As the PRT were not resourced in the OEF 3 and 4 strategy, the military personnel had to be generated from current CJTF-180 GWOT missions. In order to avoid a serious downgrade of the war fighting capability, CJTF 180 deferred further built up of PRTs unless additionally resourced.²⁹ With some Romanian officers and AFG liaison attached, the PRT received a basic multinational footprint. Despite its military lay out, the focus of the PRT is on Nation Building functions and administrative support. The Commander is authorized \$ 25,000 per development project without seeking higher level permission. Freedom of movement is regularly restricted to a 15 kilometer circle around the PRT locations and requires a 96 hour notice prior to authorization. Different from other PRTs, the U.S. is not involved in patrolling or larger scale reconnaissance activities.³⁰

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF UK AND NZ PRT

With a total of less than 100 personnel each and about six slots for reconstruction functions, the British and the New Zealand PRT in Masar-E-Sharif (MES) and Bamyān are similar to the US model. The UK Commander is additionally attached a Political Advisor, a representative of the Ministry of Development (DFID) and representatives of the U.S. Department of State, US AID and the ATA.

Both nations use their security elements extensively for reconnaissance, patrolling and military observer missions, using “safe houses” to base sustaining patrols for up three weeks. These HUMINT type operations are paralleled by special reconnaissance (SR) tasks of SOF. Force protection teams are able to simultaneously escort two different groups. The PRT locations are guarded by locally hired security personnel. Integral Quick Reaction Forces in group size stand by to cope with emergency situations. The medical support is basic and limited in the UK PRT to one surgeon and a medic. Besides a relatively strong U.S. presence in both PRTs, and additional troops stationed temporarily, the UK is additionally supported by a Danish infantry detachment.

THE GERMAN CONCEPT

The German Afghanistan Policy

In the first part of the last century originally designed as a military attempt to counterbalance British and Russian influence, German-Afghan relations matured after the First World War into a development cooperation.³¹ With almost 90,000 AFG citizens living in Germany and no colonial record in Central Asia, the country's position is recognized as neutral. Germany committed herself early to an active political and military role in the AFG Nation Building process and authorized in December 2001 the deployment of an ISAF contingent parallel to SOF under OEF. Besides major financial contributions for civil reconstruction, Germany took the lead in building up the ANP and led ISAF in collaboration with the Netherlands from February to August 2003.³² Since 2002, it sustains ISAF as the major force provider.

Based on legal considerations and the different mandates, ISAF and OEF operate with separate and different ROE. The interaction between both contingents in theater is normally limited to medical and operational emergencies and common logistical support by a Forward Logistic Site (FLS) in Uzbekistan. The international chain of command follows a similar separation. ISAF is subordinate to Joint Forces Command North (JFC-N) and SACEUR; OEF is subordinate to CJTF-180, CFC-A and USCENTCOM.

The U.S. approach to decentralize the development efforts by dispersing PRTs was joined by Germany in 2003. To separate combat from non-combat functions, Germany chose to have their PRT mandated under ISAF. This allocation facilitated national command and control and opened synergetic effects for training, logistic and mutual assistance with the 2500 strong ISAF contingent in Kabul. When NATO took over command of ISAF in February 2004, it simultaneously picked up the new command and control responsibilities (OPCON) for Nation Building outside Kabul. The de-confliction of two different military operations within one theater and the security provisions for the Konduz area were raised at the three star level between ISAF and CJTF 180. Its successor, CJTF- 76, with all OEF PRTs under its command, is also coordinating the ISAF PRTs through its TF Victory.³³

Security Considerations As Criteria For A PRT Location

Potential PRT locations were evaluated in 2003 by inter-agency reconnaissance teams. Criteria for the rating of different sites included the security situation, local requirements for reconstruction and the general acceptance of German soldiers by the local population and their leadership.³⁴ A largely calm and relative stable environment as prerequisite for an employment

is rooted in two major reasons. One is the amount of precaution that is generally expected from German politicians when the employment of forces is at stake. Even if conscripts are exempt, the aspect that soldiers are employed during peacetime makes politicians avoid or at least limit risks. The second rationale that recommends a certain level of situational security stems from practical and legal considerations for reconstruction and development. An insecure environment requires a disproportionate amount of security elements at the cost of Nation Building efforts. A robust protection force is not automatically useful for Nation Building requirements. The ISAF mandate includes the right of self defense including search and arrest of suspects. It also authorizes the use of proportionate military force to protect its mission. The mandate, however, authorizes no basis for fighting elements resisting the reconstruction process. Thus, the deployment of an ISAF PRT into an insecure or even hostile environment risks paralyzing the whole reconstruction effort.

Konduz is by no means free of risks. The region is mostly under control of the family of the AFG Minister of Defense, Marshal Fahim. Her local rule is opposed by competing commanders of the Northern Alliance who themselves try to expand their influence. The military in the region is the IV Corps under General Daud who follows Fahim. His force is a remnant of the old militia and confronted with an unclear future within the new AFG forces. The situation in the Konduz area is largely dominated by poppy growing, processing and drug trafficking. Organized crime in the area maintains close links to influential circles in Kabul. More than 2500 Taliban, drug related criminals and other spoilers create major sources of potential instability and threats to the PRT.

Konduz was selected because it scored best in terms of political intent and military capabilities. The FLS in Uzbekistan could be efficiently used as a logistical and medical line of communication. The distances and flight conditions enable medevac and qualified medical treatment within six hours.³⁵ As the U.S. was seeking to relieve its PRT in Konduz, the decision also fostered the relationship with the U.S., which was important in light of diverging positions concerning the Iraq operations.

Organization And Structure Of The German PRT

The PRT in Konduz is organized as an inter-ministerial venture between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the Ministry of the Interior (Mol), the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (MoEC) and the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Its mission is to support the ATA in an AOR in the Northeastern Provinces in strengthening the authority of the central

government, promoting democratic institutions, fostering political-administrative structures and the rule of law and to implement medium and long term reconstruction measures.³⁶

The overall command of the PRT is executed by a representative of the MoFA. His functions comprise the formal representation of the PRT and the coordination of its activities. He reports directly to the MoFA which coordinates at the ministerial level by means of a mirroring inter-ministerial Steering Group (SG).³⁷ The MoEC pillar is dealing with the identification, funding and conduct of development and reconstruction projects in the region. Together with the MoI police officers reorganizing and training the police, the MoEC is conceptually the visible tool for the Nation Building projects. The military part protects and enables the core PRT functions of the civilian pillars. The leader of the military taskforce is in military aspects OPCON to COM ISAF. In PRT related issues he is subordinate to coordinate with the civilian MoFA representative. He automatically takes the lead in all aspects of security and military operations, including emergencies and evacuations. The military contingent has strength of more than 400 servicemen comprising a battalion level staff, including Civil Military Co Operation (CIMIC) plus Admin and Contracting, a Press and Information Center, a Reconnaissance Platoon, an Infantry Company including a Tactical Air Control Party, a Helicopter Detachment, platoon size formations of Military Police (MP), Operational Information (OI), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Communication, a Headquarters Company plus a full size medical Rescue Center (RZ). The military part also integrates both, an ATA and an ISAF liaison detachment plus about 30 men multinational personal from Belgium, Switzerland, Hungary and Romania. The provisional PRT compound in the center of Konduz is guarded by a hired platoon of AFG soldiers.³⁸ Additional AFG locals are employed to reinforce the OI platoon and to assist as interpreters. The German soldiers are rotated every 4-6 months.

Assessment Of Capabilities

Despite the option to use reach back support from Germany, the spectrum of inherent capabilities is extremely broad. The civilian structure and lead adds further credibility to the PRT which facilitates access to additional communication channels and audiences like NGOs. Links to the international and political community in Kabul are useful to exchange information and to identify and overcome reluctant behavior of local authorities and actions of spoilers from the official ATA policy.

Having civilian elements embedded becomes questionable in two aspects. One is personal safety. Even if not deliberately targeted, unarmed civilians could become collateral victims because of their military entourage. A strategy that avoids military vehicles or protection

automatically limits reach and efficiency. The second disadvantage for civilians results from the fact that many of the influential functions within the AFG society are occupied by active or former military personnel. Their attitudes make them usually prefer to talk to a military representative of the PRT who has visible authority in their minds, rather than some civilian.

The civilian pillars depend in major aspects on the support of military assets, including protection, situational awareness and advanced communications. An intelligence fusion center processes information provided by human and electronic intelligence, including the back briefs of all units returning from missions outside the camp. A country team and a National Intelligence Cell support the evaluation. The Infantry Company and the MP platoon are large enough to provide transport and force protection for a number of parallel activities. Its OEF certified TACP is able to call in ISAF and or OEF Close Air Support (CAS) on short notice. The IO platoon provides the capability for information operations ranging from TV to print products and to the 24/7 operation of a local radio station in the PRT camp. OI targets the local AFG population and entertains the PRT personal with separate products on different frequencies. OI supports public education and focuses on changes in attitudes that support overarching goals. Themes range from rights of women to family hygiene, preparation of the election and the acceptance of the rule of codified law. OI opens to the PRT direct influence within an increasingly competing media environment. The ability to communicate by means of OI is a force multiplier that enhances the effects of Nation Building and contributes to the protection of the PRT. The integral EOD capability ensures freedom of movement. It is also a useful capability to liaise with commercial AFG mine clearing companies and to maintain contacts with military forces in the region. The RZ has the capabilities of a small hospital with intensive care options providing initial medical care and stabilizing casualties for medical evacuation. The PRT has three medium Transport helicopters with advanced avionics and defense capabilities and can reach back for fixed wing medevac from Uzbekistan or Germany. The efforts for medical support are immense, designed to provide comparable standards of care as at home. They need to be seen in light of the national responsibilities for employed soldiers during peacetime.³⁹ Good medical support however is also a force multiplier at the strategic and tactical level. It fosters morale and stabilizes political and public support, especially when it comes to casualties.

Summing up the capabilities, the size and lay out of the PRT suffice to run a 24/7 operation over an extended period of time. The personnel are specialized for the mission and resourced to meet military standards in terms of systematic staff work, constant situational awareness, permanent connectivity, logistical and medical support on a high standard. Including the operation of an airport, standard requirements for redundancies and reserves are

met to cope with emergencies and unforeseen events. The number and diversification of specialties also facilitates running parallel activities.

ANALYSIS

The following analysis will contrast the alternative PRT models. The US, UK and NZ PRT type will be summarized as “light” and the German version as “heavy PRT.”

COMPARISON OF CONCEPTS

The efforts of a PRT are directed into the future and must be designed for longer durations. Its output has ideally to contribute to the built up of the whole system of social, economical, administrative and security functions of a state. Even if a PRT is unable to cover all aspects, it should be able to control the repercussions of its selective activities onto other areas of the system. To acquire stability, societies and nations also depend on some kind of common identity, at least on some common values and a minimum of consensus among its population. Thus, Nation Building must also focus on education and influencing attitudes. The PRT needs adequate instruments for this holistic concept.

COMPARISON OF CAPABILITIES

Structural Capabilities

The light PRT is under military command. The number of civilian governmental representatives sent from the lead country to actively support development is limited; the command structure enables a consolidated focus on one civil-military effort. A comparable effect could be achieved in the heavy PRT by informal means only.

The military capabilities in the light PRT are limited to basic functions like security and logistics. The UK and NZ PRTs focus on reconnaissance and HUMINT as the main military activities. Some information collected is directly convertible into reconstruction requirements. The U.S. military personnel is in larger numbers involved in CIMIC projects. The commander has the advantage of a reconstruction budget at his disposal. Restrictions in its freedom of movement limit the possible reach of projects and their effectiveness. With a potential higher threat in certain U.S. AORs, the limitations probably result from concerns about potential threats in relation to the relative weakness and vulnerability of the light PRT.

Major technical means to multiply capabilities within the spectrum of Nation Building are not available. The military strength of the light PRT thus limits the physical coverage of the AOR. Even the heavy PRT with its vastly larger numbers and capabilities to multiply force, provide only partial and sporadic coverage.

The heavy PRT, with the full spectrum of headquarters function and the capability to maintain situational awareness over an extended time period, guarantees a systematic approach in identifying development requirements, decision making and planning, as well as evaluating progress. The light PRT is forced to concentrate these efforts in a few persons, dealing with numerous roles and functions simultaneously.

Different from the heavy PRT with its integrated IO capability, there are no comparable means in the light PRT for establishing a systematic and interactive development process.

The heavy PRT has a remarkably higher level of stamina and achieves with its emergency provisions maximum political stability and continuity. However, this aspect is specifically tailored to the German requirement to appease its public opinion. Other nations might be able to achieve comparable results with less effort.

Human Capabilities and Attitudes

Individuals responsible for fewer functions allow a more sophisticated level of individual specialization and quality of conduct. Individuals in the light PRT therefore tend to be less prepared for their functions than those in the heavy type. The output in Nation Building generated by the few specialized civilians is consequently low due to capacity. The U.S. personnel were directly assigned from the GWOT to a PRT and could assume to be transferred after a certain time period. The preparation in theater and was obviously short. This selection process nurtures the impression that PRT functions in the American view do not require specific capabilities and attitudes or that the PRT is merely a political signal where shortfalls and minor output do not matter. It may be a mixture of both aspects, justified by the time pressure. Other countries prepare their personnel over a period of several months for missions in post conflict operations. The training comprises intense cultural awareness and practical situational training with topics ranging from conducting cross-cultural negotiations to crowd control. The training also seeks to change attitudes. Both goals take time to achieve results. The U.S. PRT personnel had to cope with little preparation requiring a major change in attitudes. Their war fighting mindset had to be transformed into a role that required complete control of internal aggression and a positively balanced mindset to help and assist. This challenge should not be underestimated.

CONCLUSION

Heavy PRTs are in principle the most effective way to organize a Nation Building process in an environment where military assistance is required. Its broad spectrum of capabilities covers most of the aspects that need to be addressed to transform to a stable and self

sustained national entity. The inherent capabilities guarantee a systematic and coordinated development process, in which progress is tracked and sustained over years. The specialization and the numeric capacity of the personnel enable the PRT to work on a larger number of projects simultaneously. This capability is typically required in a developing country.

Nation Building is a non-linear process of interacting elements, needing constant evaluation and adjustment. Evaluation requires adequate human resources and continuity of effort unhampered by personnel rotation. Organizational stability is linked with a certain minimal size. Light PRTs are in that point of view unstable, because they are too dependent on the breadth of capabilities of a small number of personnel. Their major deficiency is the shortage of capable OI assets, which drastically limits their use of media for information, education and influence.

The setup of a light PRT is more suited for a short term effort seeking to send fast and visible political signals. If used long term, light PRTs tend to be limited to sporadic and isolated initiatives. Lasting effects are more difficult to achieve and sustain.

The German PRT capabilities were chosen to meet ideal organizational requirements for an effective Nation Building process. By making it an inter-ministerial project, expertise not available in the military could be generated. The interagency structure also fosters confidence and facilitates cooperation with UN agencies and NGOs. The MoD was neither willing, nor in a position to pay for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Conversely, the MoEC was unwilling to give up control of their budget. Consequently, certain disadvantages in the command structure had to be taken into account. They reduce the efficiency of the PRT and could, unintended, endanger the unity of effort.

It needs to be noted that political competencies and security considerations do not only imply disadvantages. The special recognition of security aspects generates a remarkably higher stamina of the concept in crises and emergencies. It contributes to political stability and fosters continuity in the development policy. A similar aspect is implied with the civil lead. Besides generating attractive interfaces with civilian organizations, the civil structure can continue once the military part has become redundant.

The German PRT is seen as a civilian organization supported by the military. However, in Afghanistan, it reports and accepts coordination by CJTF-76, a military organization. This currently works because of good will on both sides but highlights a difference in philosophy over who should be in charge of Nation Building.

Both versions have advantages and disadvantages. The light PRT is obviously remarkably cheaper. Its structure is however inadequate for a holistic and long term Nation

Building concept. This purpose requires a heavy PRT of the Konduz type which could, however, be streamlined to improve efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The German PRT's medical support could be centralized. Combat medic type first aid, would be supplemented by medical support on call and /or improved medevac assets. The concept reduces the requirement of medical assets in the Bundeswehr and is not likely to be supported by the Medical Staff.

A second improvement covers the responsibilities for Nation Building in Afghanistan. The structure with OEF and ISAF PRT is a result of history, resulting in parallel structures and complicated coordination. All PRTs should be under ISAF, including the U.S. PRTs. The security provisions for emergencies could be maintained under OEF mandate. This proposal leads to a clear separation of mandates and allows a better focus.

The U.S. needs to enhance its capabilities to conduct post conflict operations. The recent establishment of the Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization is promising.

SUMMARY

Nation Building of a state like Afghanistan is a complex, fragile and long term process. Its success is closely linked to substantial political and financial support which is best generated by coalitions of equals. The effort requires coordination by capable organizations operating in an environment with limited security, corrupted infrastructure and communication and adverse hygiene and living conditions. Military commanders must manage the results of operations and preserve military achievements. Especially under conditions of terrorism and insurgency, sanctuaries have to be immediately denied and breeding grounds dried up. Post conflict and stability operations are the logical consequence of war fighting.

The Nation Building operation of the international community in Afghanistan outlines possible solutions for future approaches. The PRT concept is a vital expansion of the stability and development process into the AFG provinces that needs to grow into an even closer network of locations. Heavy PRTs are better suited to meet the organizational requirements for a systematically coordinated, synergetic and lasting Nation Building process. The German PRT is an excellent example of the focus and holistic approach needed.

The objective of war is a better peace. Considerations of Nation Building must be an integral part in the future plans for military war-fighting operations. Winning the peace is the criteria for success of policy and military operations so the instruments for planning and

execution need adjustment. The future objectives of war-fighting should be more focused on the shaping of prerequisites for an efficient post conflict and Nation Building process.

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ENDNOTES

¹ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Meridian Printing, 1991), 349-350.

² UN SC Resolution 1368 (12 September 2001) and UN SC Resolution 1373 (28 September 2001), in Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Einsätze der Bundeswehr im Ausland*. (Berlin, GE: July 2002), 14-15.

³ Tommy Franks and Malcolm McConnell, *American Soldier* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 283.

⁴ James Fallows, "Bush's Lost Year," *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 2004, 78.

⁵ Franks, 268-272.

⁶ The Fourth Geneva Convention, August 1949, Article 47-61. Available from <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Human_Rights/geneva1.html>; Internet; accessed 22 October 2004.

⁷ Franks, 271-272.

⁸ Ibid., 272. The then Joint Force Commander, General Tommy Franks mentions with regard to considerations for post conflict measures: "In this regard I was pleased, that our allies had already pledged their support." It has to be assumed that the concept for Nation Building, based on the loosely proposed support, was relatively vague at this early stage of planning and without influence on the conduct of the military war-fighting operations.

⁹ Afghanistan Support Group, *Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions* (Bonn, GE: 5 December 2001).

¹⁰ After the Emergency Loya Jirga, the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) changed its name to Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) and is after the presidential election normally referred to as AFG government.

¹¹ Afghan Support Group.

¹² United Nations, *Security Council Resolution 1386*, (New York: United Nations, 20 December 2001).

¹³ These Nation Building activities are part of the so called Security Sector Reform (SSR).

¹⁴ United States Central Command, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams," briefing, Tampa, 24 April 2003, 4.

¹⁵ *Military Technical Agreement between The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Interim Administration of Afghanistan ("Interim Administration")*, (Huerth: Bundessprachenamt, 04 January 2002).

¹⁶ Taschenkarte Afghanistan, *Taschenkarte fuer die Soldaten des deutschen Anteils International Security Assistance Force (DtA ISAF) in Afghanistan*, (12 December 2001). The

principle of making AFG authorities act while ISAF is maintaining a restraint posture was officially called by ISAF as the “principle of the second row approach.”

¹⁷ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “International Security Assistance Force”, 11. August 2003; available from <[http://www.afnorth.nato.int/ISAF/about/about history.htm](http://www.afnorth.nato.int/ISAF/about/about%20history.htm)>; Internet; accessed 17 September 2004.

¹⁸ Jean Arnault, unedited discussion paper, summarizing UNAMA’s views on Provincial Strategies in Afghanistan for a meeting with Ambassador Brahimi, 14 October 2003, 1.

¹⁹ UN News Center, “Karzai Asks Security Council to Expand International Force in Afghanistan,” 19 February 2003; available from <<http://www.un.org/News/story/>>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2003.

²⁰ John A. Bonin, *U.S. Army Forces Central Command in Afghanistan and the Arabian Gulf during Operation Enduring Freedom: 11 September 2001-11 March 2003*, Monograph 1 -03, (Carlisle: Army Heritage Foundation, 2003), 22.

²¹ James Dao, “Bush Sets Role for U.S. in Afghan Rebuilding,” *New York Times*, 18 April 2002, p. 1, in Bonin, 22.

²² Bonin, 30.

²³ Provincial Reconstruction Teams were in early concepts also called Provisional Regional Teams comprising an identical mission spectrum. Provisional teams would later be transformed into a more capable Joint Regional Team.

²⁴ Arnault, 1-5.

²⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Afghan Update Briefing, Washington D.C., 30 September 2004, 9.

²⁶ Combined Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force (CJCMOTF), Afghanistan: CJCMOTF briefing, presumably early 2003, 17.

²⁷ United States Central Command, briefing, 24 April 2003, 7-9.

²⁸ CJTF-180, “Concept of Operations for Optimal Provincial Reconstruction Teams,” briefing Bagram, AFG, 8 August 2003, 5.

²⁹ Ibid., 12.

³⁰ Hank Nichols, previous member of PRT Gardez, interview by author, 4 December 2004, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

³¹ Oskar, Ritter von Niedermayer, *Im Weltkrieg vor Indiens Toren* (Hamburg, GE: 1942), 128-135.

³² Auswaertiges Amt, Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Bundesministerium fuer wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Das Afghanistan-Konzept der Bundesregierung* (Berlin, GE: 1 September 2003), 2.

³³ United States Central Command, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams," briefing, Tampa, 22 April 2004, 4.

³⁴ Auswaertiges Amt, 5.

³⁵ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Fue S V 1, *Allgemeiner Umdruck Nr 1/100: Handbuch fuer Auslandseinsaetze im Frieden* (Bonn, GE: October 2000).

³⁶ COMGECON Konduz, „German-led PRT-Project“, briefing, Konduz, AFG, December 2003, 2-8.

³⁷ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, *Weisung Nr. 1 zur Ausplanung des militaerischen Anteils einer DEU ISAF-Insel im Rahmen von Operationen zur Stabilisierung und Entwicklung frt AFG Provinz KUNDUZ* (Bonn, GE: Fue S V, 9 September 2003), 2.

³⁸ Ibid., Annex B1.

³⁹ The stand alone operation of 3 Helicopters, CH-53GS, in Kabul (2002-2004) required some 90 additional personnel.

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